



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Great Lakes Region
2300 East Devon Avenue
Des Plaines, IL 60018

NOV 13 2009

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Senator Richard Durbin asked the Federal Aviation Administration to respond to your letter of July 7, 2009 about your concerns regarding operations on O'Hare International Airport's Runway 27R.

If I understand your correspondence correctly, you are concerned that it appears traffic for Runway 27R approaches are not lined up with the end of the runway until they are west of Park Ridge. Your letter also states you have observed six different tracks (approaches) which converge between Park Ridge and the Runway 27R threshold, and you suggested the approaches be varied so that the aircraft overfly different parts of your neighborhood.

You are correct that approaching aircraft begin to align with the runway end approximately 20 miles from the end of the runway. This is the point the aircraft receive the electronic signals from the Instrument Landing System (ILS). Pilots fly the final approach using the ILS guidance and each runway has its own ILS on a unique set of frequencies. Although there may appear to be more lines of aircraft in the distance, when arrivals are occurring from the east on Runways 27R, 27L, and 28, there are only three arrival streams of aircraft for O'Hare, one for each runway. We do not line up multiple streams of aircraft to a single runway. From the point approximately 20 miles from the airport, all aircraft fly in single file for each runway. Only one stream of aircraft, flying in single file, is landing on Runway 27R.

Approaching aircraft aligned single file to Runway 27R are not always precisely in the same position when they fly over your neighborhood. A number of factors influence the exact location of an aircraft as it completes its descent. Aircraft type and speed, and wind and weather conditions, can cause minor differences in an aircraft's position during descent.

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These minor differences are normal, safe and expected, as the aircraft completes its single file approach to the runway.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (847) 294-7294.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barry D. Cooper". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Barry D. Cooper
Regional Administrator
Great Lakes Region

Enclosure
Transmitted Correspondence

cc: Senator Richard J. Durbin
Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky